

Bear Hunting

REGULATIONS

Regulations in red are new this year.

FOLLOWING COMMENCEMENT OF the black bear season, the Fish and Wildlife Director, after consultation with the Fish and Game Council Chairman, may close the season. The Commissioner or the Director will announce such closure, which will become effective 24 hours from the daily legal closing time of the day on which the decision is made, based upon data obtained and reviewed by Fish and Wildlife. The notification number for season closure is the permit hotline number, (609) 292-9192. Season closure notification will also be announced by news release, radio and Fish and Wildlife's website NJFishandWildlife.com.

Black Bear Hunting Season: Dec. 8–13, 2014

Hunting Hours: Legal hunting hours for black bear shall be ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.

Bag Limit: Only one bear of either sex and any age may be taken per properly licensed hunter or farmer hunter regardless of the number of black bear permits held. It is unlawful to take or attempt to take or continue to hunt for more than the number of black bear permitted.

Special permit requirement: All black bear hunters must have a current and valid firearm hunting license and a special Black Bear Hunting Permit issued by Fish and Wildlife. See *Black Bear Management Zone Descriptions*, page 61; see also *Black Bear Hunting Permits*, page 12. Hunters are limited to purchasing two black bear hunting permits, one each for two different zones. The bag limit remains at one black bear per hunter.

Youth Bear Hunters: Youth hunters with a valid hunting license must also possess a black bear hunting permit. Youth hunters aged 10 through 13 on or before Dec. 8, 2014 must be under the direct supervision of a properly licensed adult (21 years of age or older) while bear hunting. The adult must also possess a black bear hunting permit. Direct supervision means the youth hunter and the supervising adult are together at the same location. The youth hunter may not hunt independently of the adult.

Firearms and Ammunition Legal For Bear Hunting

Shotgun: not smaller than 20 gauge nor larger than 10 gauge with rifled slugs. Lead, lead alloy or copper rifled slug or sabot slug, Buckshot is prohibited.

Muzzleloader Rifle: must be single-barrel, single shot rifles not less than .44 caliber. Flintlock, percussion and in-line ignitions are allowed. Double barrel muzzleloaders prohibited. Persons hunting with a muzzleloader rifle must also possess a current and valid rifle hunting permit.

Baiting: No person shall attempt to take or kill a black bear or have in their possession or control any firearm, or other weapon of any kind, while elevated in a standing tree or in a structure of any kind within 300 feet of a baited area. On national wildlife refuges and at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the distribution of bait and/or hunting over

bait is prohibited. Hunters should also check with the landowner or administrative agency before placing bait on any hunting area.

Additional Black Bear Hunting Regulations

- Black bear hunters must wear a hat of solid fluorescent hunter orange or an outer garment containing at least 200 square inches of fluorescent orange material visible from all sides at all times while bear hunting.
- It shall be illegal to use dogs to pursue or run black bear.
- Allowable hunting methods: stand hunting, still-hunting or drive hunting.
- Hunters using or possessing any shotgun slug in the field during the bear seasons must have a shotgun with adjustable open iron or peep sights or a scope affixed to the shotgun.
- Telescopic sights of any magnification (scope power) are permitted for bear hunting on all firearms, including muzzleloader rifles.
- Shotgun shells containing single spherical projectiles referred to as pumpkin balls are prohibited.
- While bear hunting with a shotgun, it is illegal to have in possession any ammunition not authorized for bear hunting.
- Only one muzzleloader rifle may be in possession while bear hunting.
- All firearms must be cased and unloaded while being transported in vehicles.
- It is illegal to take or attempt to take a black bear with a bow and arrow or with a crossbow.
- It is illegal to take or attempt to take a bear in a den structure.

Black Bear Hunting on State Lands

- Baiting is **prohibited** within 450 feet of campsites and picnic areas in all state parks and forests to coincide with the bear management policy for these areas. Learn these locations BEFORE you hunt.
- Hunting is prohibited in the Cedar Swamp Natural Area at High Point State Park due to sensitive wetland habitat that could be impacted by going off trail in this area.
- ATV use is prohibited in state parks, forests and wildlife management areas. However, hunters might be permitted to use ATVs to retrieve a bear but only with approval from, and on a pathway approved by, the park superintendent or designee (for state parks and forests) or from Fish and Wildlife's regional Law Enforcement office (for assistance on wildlife management areas).

After Harvesting a Bear—Mandatory Bear Check Requirement

Properly licensed hunters who harvest a black bear shall immediately complete and affix to the bear hide the "Black Bear Transportation Tag" from their Black Bear Hunting Permit. Information

included on the black bear transportation tag shall include: the hunter's name, address, Conservation ID number; date and time of kill; nearest road, county and municipality of kill; and the sex of the black bear. When field dressing a black bear, leave the sex organs intact and attached to the body.

It is critical to remove the hide and cool the bear immediately after checking the bear. Cooling a bear with ice from inside the body cavity is inadequate to prevent the meat from spoiling. If the hide remains on overnight, the meat may be unsuitable for consumption.

Successful hunters must take the black bear to a designated check station by 7 p.m. on the day of the kill. Hunters shall surrender the black bear transportation tag and will be issued a legal possession seal.

Any legally killed black bear recovered too late to be brought to a designated black bear check station by 7 p.m. on the date of the kill must be reported immediately by telephone to the Northern Region Office of the Bureau of Law Enforcement (908) 735-8240. On the telephone message recording device, hunters must leave their name, address and a telephone number where they can be reached. The harvested black bear must be brought to a designated black bear check station on the next weekday to be registered and to receive a legal possession seal. After check stations have closed on Saturday, hunters reporting a bear harvest via the Law Enforcement recorder will be contacted by a Fish and Wildlife biologist on Sunday to legally check the bear and to collect biological data.

Mandatory Black Bear Check Stations

Hours: 12 noon to 7 p.m.

Warren County

- Pequest Wildlife Management Area
605 Pequest Road, Oxford

Morris County

- Black River Wildlife Management Area*
275 North Road, Chester
- Green Pond Golf Course
765 Green Pond Rd, Rt. 513, Rockaway

Sussex County

- Flatbrook Roy WMA
Rt. 615 (Walpack Rd.), Sandyston
- Whittingham WMA
148 Fredon-Springdale Rd., Newton

* Operating Opening Day and Saturday only

Black Bear Game Care

As when cooking any raw meat, care must be taken to prevent exposure to disease when consuming wild game. Black bear are known to carry *Trichinella*, a parasite commonly associated with pork. States nationwide report incidents of bears infected with *Trichinella* and New Jersey is no different. A *Trichinella* infection (Trichinellosis) is a risk only